

**RUTGERS ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL
NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY**

GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION MANUAL

POLICY#: XI.7
SECTION: INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES RELEVANT TO GME
SUBJECT: STANDARDS OF CONDUCT IN THE TEACHER-LEARNER RELATIONSHIP

I. PREAMBLE

RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School is committed to the highest standards of behavior concerning the teacher-student relationship. It is important to provide members of the medical school community an environment where teaching and learning takes place in a climate of mutual respect. RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School maintains its commitment to preventing student abuse through education, by providing support for victims and by responding with corrective action. This policy addresses the behaviors required from all teachers, which include faculty members, residents, staff, or students in a teaching role. It is intended to assure an educational environment in which students, staff, volunteers, and faculty may raise and resolve issues without fear of intimidation or retaliation.

II. STANDARDS

Student mistreatment, abuse, or harassment will not be tolerated in the course of the teacher-learner relationship. Examples of inappropriate behavior or situations that would be unacceptable include:

- a. Unwelcome physical contact, including any physical mistreatment or assaults such as hitting, slapping, kicking, or threats of the same nature;
- b. Verbal abuse (attack in words, to speak insultingly, harshly, and unjustly);
- c. Inappropriate or unprofessional criticism intended to belittle, embarrass, or humiliate a student;
- d. Requiring a student to perform menial tasks intended to humiliate, control, or intimidate the student;
- e. Unreasonable requests for a student to perform personal services;
- f. Grading or assigning tasks used to punish a student rather than to evaluate or improve performance;
- g. Sexual assault (refer to **Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences Sexual Assault Policy #00-01-10-85:00**);
- h. Sexual harassment (refer to **Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences Sexual Harassment Policy #00-01-35-25:00**);

- i. Discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, sex, age, sexual orientation, and physical disabilities.

While criticism is appropriate in certain circumstances in the teacher-learning process, it should be handled in such a way as to promote learning, avoiding purposeful student humiliation. Negative feedback is generally more useful when delivered in a private setting that fosters discussion and behavior modification. Feedback should focus on behavior rather than personal characteristics and should avoid pejorative labeling.

III. PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS AN INFRACTION OF THE STANDARDS

Students who believe that a violation of this policy has taken place should immediately contact:

- a. The Dean for Student Affairs or his/her designee or
- b. The Office of Affirmative Action – Equal Employment Opportunity (AA-EEO).

If a formal complaint is reported to the Dean for Student Affairs or his/her designee, several options may be pursued;

- a. Discuss the allegations with the consent of the accuser, among all involved parties in attempting to reach resolution among the parties. The mediation of the matter may involve contacting the chairperson of the relevant department, administrator, or Clerkship or Residency Program Director.
- b. Refer the matter through the Dean to the Hearing Body for Student Rights and Responsibilities if the abuse is student to student, or
- c. Refer the matter to the office of AA-EEO.

If the complainant wishes to remain anonymous, no formal action will be taken. However, the anonymous complaint will be filed in the Office of Student Affairs and reviewed to monitor for patterns of abuse. All reports of incidents will be held in confidence and will be dealt with quickly.

If the student goes directly to the office of AA-EEO or is referred from the Student Affairs Dean to the Office of AA-EEO that office will follow its guidelines and procedures to reach resolution (Complaint Policy #00-01-35-55:00).

Approved by the GMEC on October 10, 2000.